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ART 34 AMBT

## Claims

1. A method of preparing an aqueous extract comprising saponins on basis of waste product from a butter tree of the *Sapotacea* family, said method comprising the following steps:
- 5 (i) mixing one part waste product with 4-30 parts of water;
- (ii) incubating the mixture formed in step (i) under alkaline conditions; and
- (iii) recovering an aqueous extract comprising saponins by removing solids from the alkaline mixture formed in step (ii).
- 10 2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the alkaline conditions are obtained by addition of an alkali in the form of a base and/or an alkaline buffer.
- 15 3. A method according to claim 2, wherein the alkali is selected from the group consisting of: potassium-, sodium-, calcium-, ammonium-hydroxide or potassium-, sodium-, calcium-, ammonium-, hydroxide carbonate.
- 20 4. A method according to any of claims 1-3, wherein the incubation in step (ii) is performed at a pH of 7-14, preferably 7-10.
5. A method according to any of claims 1-4, wherein the incubation step (ii) is performed at a temperature of between 15 and 95 °C at a period
- 25 of between 10 minutes and 5 hours.
6. A method according to any of claims 1-5, wherein solids are removed from the extract in step (iii) by filtration or centrifugation.
- 30 7. A method according to any of claims 1-6 yielding an extract containing at least 1 weight-% dry matter.

8. A method according to any of claims 1-7, wherein the extract obtained in step (iii) is further concentrated and/or purified by evaporation of water and/or ultrafiltration and/or recrystallisation.
- 5 9. A butter tree extract obtainable by the method of any of claims 1-8.
- 10 10. A method of producing an aqueous extract enriched with sapogenins comprising the step of subjecting a saponin containing extract of claim 9 to enzymatic or acid hydrolysis, and thereby obtaining an extract enriched with sapogenins.
11. A sapogenin enriched extract obtainable by the method of claim 10.
- 15 12. An extract of claim 9 or 11, wherein the active compounds are chemically modified to increase their solubility in oil.
13. Use of an extract of any of claims 9, 11, or 12 as a food additive.
- 20 14. Use of an extract of any of claims 9, 11, or 12 in the manufacture of a detergent product.
15. Use of an extract of any of claims 9, 11, or 12 in the manufacture of a cosmetic product.
- 25 16. Use of an extract of any of claims 9, 11, or 12 in the manufacture of a pharmaceutical product for topical application.
- 30 17. Use of an extract of any of claims 9, 11, or 12 in the manufacture of a pharmaceutical product for lowering the level of serum cholesterol in a human being or in other mammals.

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18. Use of an extract of any of claims 9, 11, or 12 in the manufacture of a pharmaceutical product for treatment of inflammatory diseases.
- 5 19. Use of an extract of any of claims 9, 11, or 12 in the manufacture of a pharmaceutical product for systemic administration.
20. Use of an extract of any of claims 9, 11, or 12 in the manufacture of a nutritional supplement.